

**GUS NOLAN
Marist College
Poughkeepsie, NY
For the Marist College Archives and Special Collections
Index – Gus Nolan**

Project Name: Marist Heritage Project

Transcript: Yes

Summary: Yes

Photograph(s): No

CD#: 003

Name of Interviewee: Gus Nolan

Main Topics: Gus Nolan discusses his life with the Marist Brothers and Marist College. He talks extensively about what life was like as a student Brother, and how the college has developed over the years. He concludes the interview by reflecting about his decision to ultimately leave the Marist Brothers.

Others present?: No

Interviewed by: John Ansley

Interview Date: 04 October 2001

Location of Interview: Marist College Archives and Special Collections Reading Room

Recorder model and type: Marantz PMD 690

Length of interview: 1 hour, 11 minutes, 41 seconds

Number of disks: 1

Recording medium/format: Microdrive

Brand of disks: IBM 1GB Microdrive

Archival copy made: Burned to a gold alloy CD (MAM) and is held in the Marist College Archives and Special Collections. Saved as a .wav file at the highest resolution possible. CD copy is available for researchers.

Quality of original recording: Good

Describe any interference or interruptions: There is a break taken and the recording is paused at forty two minutes and eleven seconds into the interview.

Restrictions on interview access or use: None

Transcribed or summarized by: Caitlin Caserta

Brief summary of interview context and recording contents: The interview was held in the James Cannavino Library on the Marist College campus.

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<u>Time (00:00.00 ~ in hrs./mins./seconds)</u>	<u>Summary</u>
00:00.00 – 00:06.11	Gus Nolan begins by talking about his family and childhood. He names all of his siblings and their occupations, describes the area of the Bronx that he grew up in until he was thirteen, and describes his parents and their occupations.
00:06.12 – 00:10.31	Gus discusses his education growing up. He attended a Parish school called Our Lady of Assumption, went to a Marist Preparatory school in Esopus for high school, and then transferred to the Poughkeepsie school for his novitiate and college education. He reflects on what drew him to join the Marist community and that way of life, which was mostly the pictures depicting Marist Brothers actively involved in high school, playing ball, etc. He majored in English at Marion College, became an English teacher and was assigned to teach at Saint Anne’s Academy.
00:10.32 – 00:19.21	Gus describes what it was like to live on the college campus. It was a very humble and regulated life. The students were well cared for and well fed. They had plenty of work, activity, and sports. Occasionally they had to deal with things they considered unpleasant, but nothing to terrible. Their schedule, although highly structured, was also fluid, if there was bad weather that prevented sports from taking place on its designated day; they would have school that day and switch the sports to the next day. Gus also briefly reviews the steps involved in becoming a Marist Brother, as he did in 1948. He clarifies that although the Marist Brothers were very self-sufficient, they were not completely self-sufficient. Priests had to come in for their spiritual needs, and although they had gardens for vegetables and a butcher, they still needed deliveries for extra meat, bread, and vegetables that they could not supply themselves. The students also did not have a lot of interaction with the outside world. Occasionally other seminaries would visit and once a month families could come too, but they could only stay for lunch, not dinner.

- 00:19.22 – 00:26.20 Gus describes what it was like to be a new teacher at Saint Anne's Academy, and all the classes that they he had to prepare for so he could fulfill the school's, and the Brother's, needs. From there he went to Saint John's University to get a Master's Degree in English and began teaching at the Esopus high school that he himself had attended. He then was assigned to be a teacher of teacher's, so he got a second Master's in Theology at the Benedictine Monastery in Collegeville, Minnesota. When he completed his degree he was transferred to be an instructor at Marist College which he did for the next thirty years. An additional assignment that he had as an early instructor was teaching the nurses at St. Francis Hospital. The Marist Brothers had a very good relationship with St. Francis, especially because whenever the hospital needed blood they could just come and pick up a few of the Marist Brothers to donate, especially because they had everyone's blood type on file.
- 00:26.21 – 00:42.11 Gus briefly recalls the general size of the graduating class, and some of the official process of graduating. He also briefly describes the first time that Marist went for the Middle States Evaluation. He goes on to describe the growth of the campus, starting with the old wooden buildings that were on campus when he was there, discussing the old Fontaine and Donnelly Hall buildings that the brothers constructed themselves, what the dormitories used to look like, and the construction, maintenance, and use of the outdoor pool.
- 00:42.12 – 00:45.57 Gus reflects on the introduction of lay students to the campus, the facilities they lived in, the reaction of their introduction to campus. He also mentions the general reaction of transferring control of the college from the Marist Brothers to the Marist College Education Cooperation.
- 00:45.58 – 00:52.02 Gus discusses his years as a teacher at Marist, first as an English professor, and then gradually changing over to communications. He also discusses some of the communications department success stories, such as Brian O'Reilly, Bill C. Davis, and Bill O'Reilly.
- 00:52.03 – 00:58.37 Gus talks about his decision to leave the Brotherhood, and the natural progression he took towards it. He was the second or third to leave the Marist Brothers, and eventually the entire group of nine Marist Brothers he lived and worked with also left, although they all continued to work for Marist College in some shape or form. He lived on his own for a year, and then married his wife a year later.
- 00:58.38 – 01:11.41 Gus briefly compares the three college presidents and their contributions to the college and its development. While he feels that some of the Marist Brothers ideals have been lost, one of their most important ideals, giving students a quality education, is still around. He also briefly reflects on his

thoughts of where the college is going in the future. He ends the interview by briefly reviewing what he is currently doing in his retirement.